

December 7, 1998

Dear Participant:

Welcome to the Federal Communications Commission's forum on antenna structure obstruction lighting and Year 2000 issues.

As you may be aware, much of the modern equipment in our homes and offices today depends on relatively autonomous and intelligent computer software and microprocessors. In fact, the typical U.S. household now has more computer processing power than the entire Massachusetts Institute of Technology did 20 years ago. The computer software and microprocessors, in many cases, however, were not designed to account for the millennium date change of January 1, 2000.

Based on the background information collected, the Commission is concerned that Year 2000-related problems may affect antenna structure owners' ability to properly light their towers, or may affect systems designed to notify owners when light outages occur. Although the possibility of a problem may at first seem remote, the stakes are simply too high to ignore: the consequences of an aircraft striking an unlighted tower can be fatal.

As part of its Year 2000 outreach, monitoring, and contingency planning efforts, the Commission has sponsored a series of public forums to raise awareness of these potential problems and to show how organizations are addressing them. Today, we offer perspectives on antenna structure lighting and the Year 2000 rollover. Representatives from various communities affected by this issue -- including owners, trade groups, industry, and aviation interests -- will take part in the panel discussions.

Thank you for being with us today, and for helping to make this forum a success. If you would like more information on the Commission's Year 2000 programs, please visit the special Internet website above or contact Marsha MacBride, Executive Director of the Commission's Year 2000 Task Force, at mmacbrid@fcc.gov or at (202) 418-2379.

Sincerely,



Michael K. Powell
Defense Commissioner and
Chairman, FCC Year 2000 Task Force